

PRESS RELEASE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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Media Contact:

Steve Hardiman
Public Information Officer
Indianapolis Department of Public Works
Office: 317.327.2053



VISITS TO NEW KNOZONE WEB SITE REVEAL CLEAN AIR MATTERS TO INDIANAPOLIS RESIDENTS

Children & adults find the Zone Out game fun and educational

INDIANAPOLIS – As a result of the city’s newly updated air quality website featuring the fun, educational game Zone Out, traffic to the fresh, new Knozone site (<http://www.knozone.com>) increased drastically over the past month. Launched in June of this year, the fresh campaign’s tagline, “Clean Air Matters,” focuses on reminding Central Indiana that there are simple actions that everyone can take to help improve local air quality.

The new site features a revised set of no-nonsense action steps, from not idling in long drive-thru lines, to leaving a few minutes earlier to avoid rush-hour traffic. “These are steps that anyone can take to help improve the quality of air that we breathe every day,” said program manager Monica Dick.

Site traffic jumped from 1,300 to 62,000 visits in July, indicating that air quality is a growing concern for Indianapolis residents. “Indianapolis Air quality” and “Indianapolis air pollution” ranked as the 6th and 7th results localized searches on Google.

The notable growth in Knozone.com traffic is likely due in part to the smart, contemporary atmosphere of the interactive website and the release of Zone Out. Players participated in over 65,000 new games in July alone, totaling nearly 132,000 page views for the educational game. Geared toward adults and children of all ages, Zone Out is a fun, interactive game that teaches players about the Air Quality Index (AQI). Players race against the clock to complete the AQI chart as they learn about the air quality color-scale and current air condition indicators.

The site also boasts links to Knozone’s Facebook Fan page as well as a Twitter feed. The Facebook page focuses on rallying volunteers for grassroots-level “impact area” events, while the program’s presence on Twitter focuses on offering relevant tips, news and announcements.

Visitors may also opt-in via the new site to receive email or SMS text message notifications during Knozone Action Days. A Knozone Action Day is an alert that is declared when air pollution levels such as ground-level ozone are predicted to climb to levels that are unhealthy for sensitive groups, represented by the color orange on the Air Quality Index (AQI).

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“We’re making a difference in Indianapolis’s air quality, and having fun educating our citizens. What could be better?” said DPW Director David Sherman. “Managing air quality is important to our region’s continued economic viability, but we felt it was important to make this information speak to anyone eight to eighty-years-old. Clean air does matter, and everyone can help make a difference.”

Additional enhancements to the Knozone site including downloadable AQI Widgets and more are expected in the near future.

Interested residents are encouraged to sign up for the email blasts, text messages, Facebook group, or Twitter feed to stay up to date on the latest enhancements to the site.

About Knozone:

Ground level ozone is monitored in Indianapolis from April through the end of September. High temperatures, sunlight, low winds and increasing energy demands make those months the most likely to have harmful amounts of pollutants in the air.

Clean air is good for our health and our environment – it’s also beneficial for our bottom line. By reducing emissions and maintaining clean air, Indianapolis can avoid federal designations that convey a perception of decreased livability and create a negative economic impact. That’s why it’s important for all of us to work together to reduce air pollutants including fine particulate matter and carbon monoxide.

If you have asthma or are affected by air pollutants, visit the Air Quality Index website. And be sure to add 317.327.4AIR to your contacts list. It’s your hotline for daily ozone information that will help you plan your day accordingly.

Mayor Ballard launched SustainIndy and created the Office of Sustainability in October of 2008. Both represent an innovative enterprise aimed at delivering long-term cost savings to the city, building the local economy, improving our quality of life and enhancing our environmental and public health. Its efforts are designed to aggressively move Indianapolis forward in making it one of the most sustainable cities in the Midwest. For more information, visit www.sustainindy.org.

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